fantastic in outline, deserted, a veritable fairy-
land. Of part of it, seen under one aspect,
Loti writes: " We crept along the shoulder
of a mountain by the only path, whence we
had a wide view over the vast expanse of ocean,
with here and there a low islet covered with im-
probable-looking vegetation : pandanus of ante-
diluvian aspect, and forests which might be relics
of the extinct period of the Lias. A solemn leaden
sky, like that of a past age, a shrouded sun dragging
long shafts of pale silver over the wide waters. . . ."
But no " creeping along the shoulder" of the
mountains gives a view comparable to that to be
obtained by climbing this initial barrier. Paths
up are rare, but taking one, the climber comes out
on a great rolling plateau waist deep in fern. This
plateau slopes up the ragged crags> and down, at the
far end, to the wild upheaval of the Pari. Every-
where, too, it is intersected by great

valleys which
must have been rent open in some
colossal cataclysm
of the primeval period. Grasping a
tree, you can
peer down into them—literally peer
down, or, here
and there, scramble and clutcji your
way into the
depths. Conceive a practically
sheer wall of a